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A

SERMON

Preached before the Right Honourable the

Lord-Mayor,

THE

ALDERMEN

AND

Governours of the ſeveral Hoſpitals

OF THE

CITY of *LONDON*;

At St. *Bridgets* Church,

On *Wedneſday* in *Eaſter* Week, 1698.

Being One of the Anniverſary Spittle-Sermons.

By *THO. LYNFORD*, D. D. and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majeſty.

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A Spittle-Sermon

Preached before the

Lord-Mayor.

1 TIM. vj. 17, 18, 19.

Charge them that are Rich in this World that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the Living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

That they do good, that they be rich in good Works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate.

Laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life.

THE Apoſtle had in the foregoing part of the Chapter diſcourſed much againſt Covetouſneſs, and very ſeriouſly adviſed *Timothy* to be aware of the love of Money, as being the *root of all evil. But thou, O man of God, flee theſe things.* And here, in the cloſe of his Epiſtle, he preſſeth him to

urge the ſame thing upon others, and to teach the Rich Merchants of *Epheſus* the true uſe of Worldly Wealth; which does not conſiſt in hoarding up abundance, but in laying out to the beſt advantage what a Man is poſſeſſed of.

He would not have them forbid the honeſt acquiſition or poſſeſſion of the good Things of this Life. They might lawfully injoy as much of them as either by the common courſe of the World fell to be their Lot and Portion, or they by their honeſt Labour and Induſtry could obtain, provided they did ſo moderate their Affections in reſpect of them as neither to act any thing that was ſinful for the obtaining them, nor when they had got them to be high-minded, nor to truſt in them, but to be Charitable, and to do all the Good they could with them.

Theſe Three laſt are the Duties in the Text, which having firſt diſcourſed of, I ſhall then conſider the Arguments here laid down to enforce the Practice of them, as well as the Obligation which lies upon the Miniſters of the Goſpel to teach others the Neceſſity and Advantage of them.

Among the Duties which they who are Rich in the World muſt be charged to obſerve,

The Firſt is, *That they be not high-minded.* So ſtrong is the deſire of being thought to excel others, that many phanſie that to be Excellent in themſelves which really is not: Others, becauſe they would fain be admired, dreſs up themſelves in borrowed Colours, and aſcribe that to themſelves which they are inwardly conſcious they have no reaſon to pretend to. Now if Men can be thus conceited of their own Fictions, can ſet up within their Breaſts an Idol of their own mak-

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ing, and then fall down and worſhip it; how eaſily may they be tempted to value themſelves upon the account of thoſe things which all the World admires as well as they?

Riches and Worldly Greatneſs carry ſuch a luſtre and brightneſs along with them, are ſo greedily perſued as being ſo many ways ſubſervient to Eaſe and Luxury, that it is no wonder if many believe themſelves ſo much more honourable and worthy by how much a greater Portion they have of them, and on the other hand think thoſe moſt unworthy, moſt to be deſpiſed, who moſt want them.

Which is never more ſeen than in ſuch, who in a low Condition were moſt humble and crouching, but when advanced to Preferment and Greatneſs are moſt inſolent of all others.

Now nothing is more manifeſt than that the deſign of our Saviours coming in the Fleſh was to wean us, even from the love of the Things of this World; and if ſo, then to be ſure from entertaining too good an Opinion of our ſelves upon the account of them. That this was our Saviours deſign is evident from the meanneſs of his own appearing; from his pronouncing thoſe to be bleſſed who are meek and poor in Spirit; and from his condeſcending to converſe with, and to adminiſter to the Neceſſities of the moſt weak part of Mankind.

Further, ſince what we injoy does not proceed from our own Strength or Wit, but is the free Gift of God, what Reaſon can we have to be proud of what we are beholden to another for?

Or if this be not ſufficient to ſuppreſs all conceited Thoughts, and to make us think more modeſtly of our ſelves, let us impartially reflect upon our many Follies

and Indiſcretions, our Errors and Ignorances; theſe being enough, amidſt our greateſt Proſperity, to ſhame us out of any vain and arrogant conceit of our ſelves upon the account of it.

If any thing can make us juſtly entertain a good Opinion of our ſelves, it muſt be Vertue and Goodneſs; becauſe theſe are Things truly valuable, and by which we make the neareſt approaches to him whoſe Perfections are Infinite: But yet when we conſider that although we have done never ſo much Good, we have likewiſe been guilty of a great deal of Sin and Folly; that whatever we have done of that kind has been done *through the power of him that ſtrengthens us*; nay, that even our beſt Performances are lame and imperfect, and carry the ſtamp of Frailty upon them; we ſhall find that we have but little Reaſon, even for their ſake, to cheriſh a high conceit of our ſelves, or mean opinion of others. How much leſs Reaſon then have we to do it upon the ſcore of Things without us, which do not render us more perfect in our ſelves, nor contribute much to our Happineſs, and which do promiſcuouſly happen alike to all, to the moſt ignorant and moſt wicked as ſoon as to the moſt wiſe and moſt honeſt?

Secondly, *They who are Rich in the World muſt be charged not to truſt in their Riches, but in God.* How great ſoever our Poſſeſſions are they cannot ſecure us from Danger and Trouble, and therefore we muſt not place any confidence in them, but muſt look higher, and in our greateſt Proſperity ſtill own our dependance upon God, and beg his Bleſſing to go along with us in all our Undertakings. *Some put their truſt in Chariots and ſome in Horſes*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, but he is the moſt prudent, the moſt happy, *who truſts in the Name of the Lord.*

Lord. Whereas on the other hand, he is ſtiled *the Fool*, in the Goſpel, who becauſe his Ground brought forth plentifully was for taking his Eaſe and Reſt, as if his preſent Wealth was a ſufficient ſecurity againſt all croſs Accidents whatſoever.

Riches, it is true, are of great uſe to make us paſs through this World with more Comfort and Satisfaction, but it's God's Bleſſing only that can continue them to us. And therefore he is chiefly to be relyed upon, and thoſe no otherwiſe to be valued than as they are Inſtruments under him, very well fitted to promote our preſent Content.

But this I ſhall have occaſion more largely to inſiſt on, when I conſider the Arguments made uſe of by the Apoſtle to enforce the Duties in the Text.

The Third and laſt of which is, to be *Charitable*. To ſhow the neceſſity whereof, as well as the manner of performing it aright, St. *Paul* makes uſe of ſeveral Expreſſions: *Charge them that are Rich in the Word that they do good, that they be Rich in good Works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate.* Each of which deſerves our particular Conſideration.

1. *They who are Rich in this World muſt do Good.* It is a very comprehenſive Expreſſion, and takes in all the ſeveral ways of being beneficial to Mankind. Whatever tends to the Advantage of particular Perſons, or of whole Communities, of Mens Souls or Bodies; whatever promoteth the Intereſt of our Relations, or of thoſe that are not at all akin to us, of our own Countrymen or of Strangers, of Friends or of Enemies, it is all here hinted to us. To inſtruct the Ignorant or Miſlead, to feed the Hungry, cloath the Naked, viſit the Sick,

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aſſiſt the Widows, ſupport the Fatherleſs, deliver the Oppreſſed from him that would ſpoil him, to redeem Captives, to relieve the Diſtreſſed, of whatſoever Stock, Family, Country or Religion, they happen to be.

To erect Hoſpitals, to build Work-houſes, to endow Schools and Colleges, to ſettle Annuities for Charitable Uſes.

All this, and whatever elſe there is whereby the Welfare, the Eaſe and Comfort, the Relief, the Subſiſtence of others is promoted, is included in this Expreſſion of *doing Good.*

Great is the Advantage which Rich Men injoy above others, in that by Reaſon of that Power and Authority which their Riches procure for them, and by Reaſon of that Plenty whereby they are able to ſupply the different Neceſſities of thoſe that want, and to promote the greateſt and moſt uſeful Acts of Charity, they may, if they pleaſe, make themſelves univerſal Bleſſings to Mankind, whilſt without any limitation or reſerve they do Good to all Men, and do it (as Occaſions offer themſelves) all manner of ways.

2. *They muſt be Rich in good Works.* What I have ſpoken already concerning doing of Good, will in a great meaſure interpret this Expreſſion of *being Rich in good Works.* For they who do not confine themſelves to any particular Acts of Charity, but as they have Opportunity do variouſly diſperſe their Bounty, and do Good to all Men, may be truly ſaid to be *Rich in good Works.*

I ſhall therefore only add, that as this Expreſſion does imply different Acts of Charity, ſo may it likewiſe hint to us that Conſtancy which ought to be in the performance of them.

It

It is not enough for them who are Rich to do the ſame Acts of Charity once or twice, to do them at ſet and ſolemn Times and Seaſons, upon ſome emergent Occaſions, or only at their Death; but *they muſt be Rich in good Works, i. e.* they muſt do them over and over again; and if they have not Objects of Charity near them, muſt look abroad and find them elſewhere.

They muſt not excuſe themſelves from this Duty by pretending they have given lately, or that the Times are difficult, and that it will be beſt to lay up againſt a bad day: But if God has bleſſed them with wherewithal to do it, at all Times and in all Seaſons, whenever proper Objects of Charity offer themſelves, they are bound, according to their Ability, to take notice of, and to be kind to them.

3. *They who are Rich in the World muſt be ready to diſtribute.* This denotes that willingneſs and chearfulneſs of Mind which ought to accompany their Charity. There muſt be no force nor compulſion in it, no regard to any by-ends in the doing it: But they muſt do it out of a Principle of Conſcience, and becauſe they know it to be the Duty of every ſincere Chriſtian. Some are bountiful out of meer ſhame becauſe their Neighbours are ſo: Others, to gain the applauſe of Men: Others, to further ſome particular Deſign, which by ſuch a ſhow of Piety they hope may be promoted: Others, to make an Atonement, as they think, for their Sins; and others are prevailed upon to be ſo by the meer ſight of pitiful Objects, or by the importunity of bold and impudent Beggars. Now none of theſe, in all theſe Caſes, can be truly ſaid to be *ready to diſtribute*; becauſe there is ſomething of compulſion in all of them, and they would never have been ſo free to relieve others had they

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not been influenced by ſomething elſe rather than the love of God, and a ſenſe of their Duty.

When our Hearts are as open as our Hands; when in affording Relief to others we conſult their Intereſt, and not our own; when we inquire after Objects of Charity our ſelves; are glad of any Opportunity of doing Good to others; when we expect no Requital or Reward for our Charity, but what God is pleaſed to beſtow upon us; then, and not otherwiſe, may we be ſaid to expreſs that readineſs to diſtribute which the Apoſtle here makes mention of.

4. And Laſtly, *They who are Rich in this World muſt be willing to communicate.* This is the top of Chriſtian Charity, when Men are not only ready to give but to give ſo largely as to make thoſe, whom they give to, co-partners with them in the good Things which they injoy.

In the early times of Chriſtianity all things were common, and the firſt Proſelites, for fear they ſhould not have wherewithal to ſupply the Neceſſities of others, or not be ſo prudent as they ought to be in their Diſtributions, ſold their Poſſeſſions, and laying the Price of them at the Apoſtles Feet, left it to them to diſpoſe thereof as they thought fit.

Now the word which is here interpreted *willing to communicate* is derived from the word which expreſſeth that liberal participation of one anothers good Things, which was ſo cuſtomary in the Apoſtles days: And therefore St. *Paul* in the Text had, without queſtion, reſpect thereunto, and was deſirous that *Timothy* ſhould put the Rich Men in mind of it.

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And although there be not now the ſame Reaſon for the

the being thus liberal, as there then was, yet it ought to be an Argument to all thoſe who have great Poſſeſſions not to ſtint themſelves to any leſſer Acts of Charity, but in Caſes of great Neceſſity to give largely, and rather to truſt God's Providence for a freſh Supply, than ſuffer their diſtreſſed Neighbours to periſh for want of a ſeaſonable Relief, although it could not be afforded them without a conſiderable diminution of their own Fortunes.

Having thus explained to you the Duties in the Text, I ſhall now examine the Arguments made uſe of by the Apoſtle to enforce the Practice of them.

The Firſt of which is fetched from the Nature of thoſe Things which the Rich Men of the World are poſſeſſed of: They are *uncertain. Charge them that are Rich in the World that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain Riches.*

The Second, from the Nature of God, and the Effects of his Providence. He is a *Living God, who giveth us richly all the good things we injoy.*

The Third, from the Conſideration of that Reward, which they who perform the forementioned Duties ſecure to themſelves, *They do lay up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life.*

Firſt, Rich Men muſt not be high-minded nor truſt in uncertain Riches, but be Charitable; becauſe Riches are *uncertain* Things. When we think our ſelves moſt ſecure of them, they make themſelves Wings and fly away, and leave us full of Grief and Sorrow for the want of them.

Let Men be never ſo induſtrious in heaping up for

themſelves the good Things of this Life; let them be placed in never ſuch thriving Circumſtances; let them be never ſo watchful over their Concerns, they cannot be aſſured that their proſperous Condition ſhall long continue ſo. Various are the Changes and Alterations which happen in the World. Infinite are the Caſualties and Misfortunes of Humane Life; and even the moſt Inanimate Things prove ſometimes the occaſion of our Temporal Ruine. One Earthquake may demoliſh our Houſes, one flaſh of Lightning conſume all our Subſtance, one Tempeſt ſink all our Fortunes.

Beſides theſe, our own Folly, the Folly or Knavery of others, how do they often concur to our Deſtruction? The Careleſneſs of a Relation, the Treachery of a pretended Friend may deprive us of all that we poſſeſs. Thieves may break into our Houſes. A Servant may run away with our Goods. A Perjured Raſcal may ſwear us out of our Eſtate. They with whom we truſted our Concerns may break and undo us.

Not to mention that God ſometimes, for Reaſons beſt known to himſelf, does after an unaccountable manner hinder ſome Perſons from thriving, and conſumes what they at preſent injoy.

What a madneſs then muſt it needs be for any of us to ſwell and look big upon the account of what, for ought we know, we may be forced to part with the next Moment? To fanſie our ſelves to be ſo much above any other part of Mankind, when we cannot be ſure how ſoon our Condition may be much meaner than that of the meaneſt of them, whom we at preſent make ſo little an account of.

How much better would it be to do Good with what we have, ſince we cannot tell but that within a very few Days or Years we may have nothing left us but the Memory of our Benefactions? How

How much greater Wiſdom would it be to oblige Mankind by Acts of Charity and Munificence, to make our ſelves Friends of the unrighteous Mammon whilſt we are able, ſince by this means we may happen to ſecure to our ſelves their aid and aſſiſtance when we ſtand in need thereof, and we know not how ſoon we may?

What could be more for our Advantage than to part with a few uncertain Satisfactions for the certain Favour of God, *who is a living God, and freely giveth us all things?* Which laſt words contain,

The *Second* Argument uſed by the Apoſtle to enforce the forementioned Duties, being fetched from the Nature of God and of his Providence. Although Riches are of a tranſitory and periſhing Nature, yet God is not. To rely upon them is to rely upon a broken Reed: But to rely upon God is to rely upon an Immutable Being, who is the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for Ever. No croſs Accidents can take him from us, nothing can leſſen his Power to help us. *He is a living God.*

To diveſt our ſelves then of all vain Conceits of our own Worth and Excellency, and to place our Truſt and Confidence only in him, is the moſt ready way to be ſecure from Danger, and to have every thing that is fit and convenient beſtowed on us. For his Power is ſufficient to do us any kindneſs; and he has promiſed not to forſake them who put their truſt in him.

Which Promiſe he cannot but be then moſt inclined to make good in a remarkable manner, when he ſees them ſo chearfully to diſtribute their Alms to the Neceſſities of thoſe whom he has moſt expreſly commanded them to relieve, of thoſe whoſe Cauſe he doth after a more eſpecial manner eſpouſe, accounting every Act of Mercy, which is ſhown to them, to be an inſtance of good Will towards himſelf.

And as his Power ought to oblige us to perform theſe Duties, ſo ought his Goodneſs too. For he is not only a Living God, but a *God that giveth us richly all things to injoy. In him we live, and move, and have our being*; and unto him we are indebted for all the good Things which we are poſſeſſed of. Now to value our ſelves (as has been already obſerved) upon the account of what we are beholden to another for, to confide in what is wholly at anothers diſpoſal; when another has been kind to us not to be kind to his Friends, are Inſtances of the greateſt Folly and Ingratitude.

Beſides, ſince God's Providence intermixeth it ſelf in all Humane Affairs, we may be aſſured that he being Infinitely Wiſe, knows better what is fit for us than we our ſelves do, and being Infinitely Good will be far from ſuffering us to want any thing that he knows is convenient for us to have: So that by placing our whole Truſt and Confidence in him, and by our expreſſing, after a peculiar manner, ſuch our Truſt and Confidence by Acts of Charity and Beneficence, we may not only ingage him to ſecure us in our preſent Poſſeſſions, but likewiſe to be more kind to us than he has hitherto been, and to beſtow larger Inſtances of his Favour upon us. But,

If the Conſideration of the uncertainty of Riches, and of God's Providence intermixing it ſelf in all Humane Affairs, ſhould not prove a ſufficient Motive, to thoſe who are Rich, to be Charitable, and not to truſt in their Riches, but only in the Living God, yet methinks,

The Apoſtles *Third* Argument ſhould, it being fetched from the Conſideration of a Future Reward; *They lay up for themſelves in ſtore a good foundation for the time*

time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life. It is the Fault of ſome Rich Men that they lay up nothing, but conſume what God has bleſt them withal in Luxury and Intemperance. Others are conſtant hoarders, but for others, and not for themſelves: *They heap up Riches, and cannot tell who ſhall gather them.* Many times the greateſt Portion of them (they being dead and gone) is ſpent, before it can be decided who ought to poſſeſs them. At other times their ſpend-thrift Heirs conſume in a ſhort time what they have been laying up ſo many Years. At other times their greateſt Enemies by Perjury, Fraud, open Violence, or ſudden Changes in Government, become Maſters of all the Wealth which they with ſo much Labour and Induſtry have for ſo long time been treaſuring up.

But now he who truſts in God, and is Charitable, at the ſame time that he parts with his preſent Worldly Goods, *lays up for himſelf Treaſures in Heaven, where neither moth nor ruſt doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through and ſteal.* He lays a good Foundation that he may obtain Eternal Life.

Such his behaviour lays indeed a good Foundation for many other things beſides. It lays a Foundation of inward Joy and Satisfaction: For nothing can be more delightful than the ſenſe of having done what God commands; of having imitated him in one of his chiefeſt Attributes, his Goodneſs; of having in ſome meaſure finiſhed what, notwithſtanding God's Almighty Power, was left imperfect; and of having been the cauſe that others, who were full of Grief and Complaints, live as eaſie as himſelf. It lays a Foundation for a good Reputation, it being a practice which all commend, but none ever dared to find fault with, which many wiſh they could imitate when they are

not able, and others make a ſhow of imitating when they do not: It being likewiſe a Practice that will make the World ſpeak well of us when we are in our Graves, that will engage Poſterity to admire us, and to bleſs and praiſe God for the many Inſtances we have left of our Bounty and Liberality towards his indigent Servants.

It lays a good Foundation for the Friendſhip of others in the time of need: They being the moſt likely to meet with kind uſage who have uſed others kindly, when in the ſame Circumſtances.

It lays a good Foundation (as has been already taken notice of) for the increaſe of our Worldly Wealth, by the ſpecial Bleſſing of God's Providence; it being agreeable to his Goodneſs, Wiſdom, and to that conſtant Care which he has of Humane Affairs, to heap his Bleſſings upon ſuch as obey his Laws, upon ſuch as ſhow themſelves grateful towards him, and from whom he is ſure upon all occaſions to receive a Portion, of what he gives, back again for the uſe of his indigent Servants.

But theſe Things, how excellent ſoever in themſe'ves, are not to be compared with that ineſtimable Reward which it intitles them to in another World, with that Eternal Life: For the laying hold whereof the Practice of theſe Duties does alſo lay a very great Foundation.

Now a Foundation is that upon which the ſafety and ſtrength of any Building does mainly depend, but yet the Building may be in other reſpects faulty. The Practice of theſe Duties alone therefore is not ſufficient to ſecure to us Eternal Happineſs; becauſe they who are careful in the performance of them may be faulty in many other reſpects; but nevertheleſs they go a great way towards it. They lay a Foundation for the obtaining it, and that upon theſe following accounts.

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1. In that they diſpoſe towards the performance of all other Religious Duties whatſoever.

2. In that they do, after a more eſpecial manner, draw our Minds off from doting too much upon the Things of this Life.

3. In that they do beget within us ſuch a temper of Mind as does in a great meaſure conſtitute the Happineſs of the other World.

1. They who are Humble, who truſt in God, and are Charitable, do lay a good Foundation for the obtaining Eternal Life, in that they hereby become well-diſpoſed towards the performance of all other Religious Duties whatſoever. To fit a Man for Eternal Happineſs, it is not ſufficient to perform ſome Duties, and to neglect others; and therefore when we obſerve it to be annexed to any particular Duties, all other muſt be ſuppoſed to accompany them; and indeed there is ſuch a cloſe connexion betwixt all Religious Duties whatſoever, that if one be but rightly performed, it will help forward the right performance of all other. So that if the Duties in the Text be performed out of a true Principle, *viz.* becauſe God requires them at our hands, we ſhall upon the ſame Grounds be diſpoſed to obey God in all other reſpects whatſoever. For if our Conſciences teach us that it is reaſonable to obey God in ſome Inſtances, they will likewiſe inform us that it is as reaſonable to obey him in any other. If they upon the performance of theſe Duties in the Text, afford us a great deal of pleaſure and inward delight, they do at the ſame time incline us to the practice of ſuch other Duties, from whence we may with juſt Reaſon expect the ſame delight and ſatisfaction.

Beſides, they who are humble will be moſt diſpoſed to

to hearken to Inſtruction, and to be attentive to any of God's Inſtructions to Vertue and Holineſs; and they who truſt in God, and expreſs ſuch their truſt in him by Acts of Charity, muſt needs think themſelves obliged to do every thing that may ſecure them an Intereſt in his Favour whom they thus rely upon: And conſequently they will thereby be put upon Worſhipping him, upon Praying unto him, and giving him Thanks, and upon indeavouring to pay an intire Obedience to all his Commands. The ſame will likewiſe very much diſpoſe them for the practice of Temperance; for they who give ſo freely for the relief of others, will have leſs to ſpend upon the gratification of their own Luſts and Affections. And as for all thoſe Duties which relate to our Neighbour, the doing Works of Charity, being the higheſt Inſtance of Affection for him, contains all the reſt under it. For how can he be Unjuſt, Malicious, Envious, Cruel, or the like, who is deſirous that all near and about him ſhould live comfortably as well as himſelf, and therefore can and does chearfully leſſen his own Income, that they may not be deſtitute of a fit and convenient Subſiſtence? So that there is ſcarce any Duty of Religion which the Duties in the Text don't ſome way or other urge us to perform, and thereby *lay a good Foundation againſt the time to come, that we may lay hold on Eternal Life.*

2. The Duties in the Text do lay a good Foundation for the obtaining Eternal Life, in that they do, after a particular manner, wean our Minds from doting too much upon the Things of this Life. Abundance of Riches are apt to take up all our Time, to engage all our Thoughts, to engroſs all our Affections, to imploy all our Endeavours, ſo that we ſhall neither have Leiſure nor a Mind to weigh and conſider any thing elſe, nor

nor be willing to attend to Things more excellent, and of a more weighty and neceſſary Concernment.

Now by reſigning our ſelves up with all Humility to God's diſpoſal, and by freely parting with our Worldly Goods to relieve thoſe whom he has commanded us to take care of, we do cut off many of theſe Temptations, which would otherwiſe obſtruct our inquiries after Heaven and Happineſs; we leſſen our preſent Cares about Temporal Injoyments, and by that means have more hours to ſpend about God and Religion.

By giving away what the greateſt part of Mankind is wont to have ſo great a regard for, we declare our ſelves to be but Strangers and Pilgrims here: That our Expectations reach higher than this World: That we deſpiſe all theſe ſplendid Trifles and glittering Vanities here below in compariſon of that Eternal Bliſs and Glory which we have the promiſe to be made partakers of in the Life to come. And by how much the Pleaſures of another State are more in our Thoughts, by ſo much more will our Affections move towards them, by ſo much more ſhall we be excited to do every thing neceſſary for the obtaining them.

3. And Laſtly, By the Duties in the Text is laid up a good Foundation for the obtaining Eternal Life; becauſe the Practice of them does beget within us ſuch a Temper of Mind as does in a great meaſure conſtitute the Happineſs of the other World. The Inhabitants of Heaven are always content with their preſent Circumſtances, are not in the leaſt conceited of their own worth, nor do they aſpire towards any thing above God's allowance; but their Hearts and Lips are conſtantly full of thankful Acknowledgments for his gracious dealings with them, and they do every moment of their Lives depend upon his Almighty Power, his

Infinite Goodneſs, his Faithfulneſs to perform his Promiſes for the continuance of that Happineſs which they are poſſeſſed of.

And as for all kind of Offices of Love and Friendſhip, theſe are their conſtant Study and Imployment. For the Kingdom of Heaven is a Kingdom where there is nothing of Striſe and Contention, nothing of Hatred and Malice, nothing of Covetouſneſs and Ill Nature, but where the Subjects thereof live in perpetual Peace and Amity both with their Prince, and with one another; where all the kind Arts of Endearment are improved to their higheſt pitch and perfection; where all endeavour the Eaſe and Contentment of thoſe they converſe with, always ſtriving, by all the Arts of a ſincere Affection, to oblige one another, and to render thoſe they converſe with as happy as themſelves.

Now the more humble and contented we are in this Life, the more likely we are to be ſo affected in the next. The more we learn to depend upon God at preſent, the better diſpoſed we ſhall be to do it hereafter. The more kind we are to one another in this World, the fitter we ſhall be for the Converſation of Saints and Angels in the World to come.

Not that we ſhall then have occaſion to perform any ſuch Acts of Charity as relate to the Neceſſities of others: For we ſhall not meet with any in Heaven who ſtand in need of them. All there will be Rich as well as we, and many of thoſe whom we now relieve in as joyful a Condition as their late Benefactors. But the very performance of ſuch Acts of Beneficence at preſent, does therefore fit us for the Converſation of thoſe Bleſſed Souls above, in that it begets within us a good liking and eſteem for one another, a ſincere and earneſt deſire of our Neighbours Welfare, a ſatisfaction in his proſperous

perous Condition. All which are the chief ingredients that make Heaven so delightful a place, and the Friendship of Saints and Angels to be so charming as it is.

Having thus examined the Arguments made use of by the Apostle to enforce the Duties in the Text, I should now in the Third and last place consider the Obligation which lies upon the Ministers of the Gospel to teach others the Necessity and Advantage of them.

The Apostle St. *Paul*, in speaking to *Timothy*, saith to all the inferiour Ministers and Dispensers of God's Word, *Charge them that are Rich that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches*, &c.

Rich Men therefore must not take it amiss, since they see from whence we derive our Commission, if we often press upon them the observance of these Duties.

But I hope that my having inlarged upon the forementioned Arguments will at present excuse me from assuming that Authority which by my Function belongs to me.

Especially since by reading the following Report I shall represent to your Thoughts what may happen to have a greater influence upon you, *viz.*

The good Effects of your Predecessors Charity, as well as of some amongst your selves.

The Report, &c.

You have heard the Report; from whence you may easily gather what great Things have been, and are daily, done by the Rich and Good Men of this Renowned City.

How diligent and careful they are in the administration of other Mens Charity.

How liberal oftentimes in diſpenſing their own.

But yet I cannot but with ſome ſort of Grief and inward Compaſſion obſerve to you, That all the Hoſpitals do make Complaint of their Wants, and ſeem in a humble manner to intimate that Charity is grown colder of late than it was formerly.

Now the Neceſſities of Mankind, I am ſure, are not fewer than they have been formerly.

It cannot therefore but be a Melancholly Conſideration to think that in ſo Populous and Wealthy a City, there ſhould be fewer Benefactors found to relieve them.

Should I ask the Governours of *Chriſts-Church* Hoſpital, what is the Reaſon that the Liſt of their Orphans decreaſeth Yearly?

That ſo many Children are diſmiſſed their Houſe, and none received into their Places?

Should I ſay unto them,

Have all the Citizens of *London* been of late ſo proſperous, as neither by their Misfortunes, nor their Follies, to leave, when they dye, their Families in want?

Have none of their Widows been with you to receive their Sons and Daughters into your Care, and to eaſe them of the burthen of them?

Would they not reply? Alas, we never were more preſſed to receive Children into our Houſe, neither was there ever greater Occaſion that we ſhould.

But what would you have us do?

We have not wherewithal to Maintain thoſe we have already.

There is a great Debt upon us, and our Gifts are but very few.

Rich Men now a-days not only forget us whilſt they are alive, but alſo in their laſt Wills and Teſtaments.

This I fear would be their Excuſe; but it is a thou-

ſand

ſand pities that they ſhould be conſtrained to make it.

For the Caſe of diſtreſſed Orphans is very ſad.

They can have no Contrivance for preſent Maintenance.

Neither do they underſtand whom it is proper to make application unto for Relief.

They are but juſt come into the World, and for want of a prudent Education may happen to ſpend a long term of Years in Miſery, and ſometimes in Vice, and to be for ever miſerable in the World to come.

Which way then can any Rich Man better beſtow his Charity, than by throwing part of it into that noble Fund?

Where not only Food and Raiment, but ſuch excellent Inſtruction alſo, both as to Learning and Manners, is provided for theſe Orphans, as may not only prevent their taking ill Courſes,

But may likewiſe put them into a way of Thriving in the World, and of being in time Benefactors themſelves.

I will add one Thing more on their behalf.

They do upon theſe Solemn Occaſions make a noble part of your Proceſſion.

By them you make your publick boaſt, not only to the whole Nation, but to Strangers and Foreigners, how kind you are to the Fatherleſs, and what great Care you take of them.

In Requital therefore to the Honour which is done your City by their Appearance, it may well become you to have a particular Regard to their Hoſpital, and to contrive ſome way both to increaſe their Annual Revenues, and to put them out of Debt.

But I am called from *Chriſt-Church* by the Sighs and Groans, the Shreiks and Lamentations of a company of miſerable Wretches.

Some

Some with broken Legs and Arms, ſome with wounded and mangled Members, ſome with Ulcers and putrified Sores, ſome thin and meagre like a ſhadow, others ſwelled to a prodigious bigneſs.

Some tortured with moſt wracking Pains in particular parts of their Bodies.

Others weak and infirm in all their Limbs.

All which, with many other in the like ſad Circumſtances, do earneſtly beg to be conſider'd.

And to have ſome Cure afforded them by the Charity of others, which they are not able to be at the Charge of themſelves.

But the Governours both of St. *Bartholomew*'s, and of St. *Thomas*'s Hoſpital, are ready to make anſwer;

That it grieves them very much to deny theſe Poor People their Requeſt; that they are overcharged already with Perſons in their Condition.

That their Contingent Charities are of late much fall'n off, and their Income is too ſcanty to Maintain their preſent Charge.

Now how can any Wealthy Citizen, who fares deliciouſly every day, who keeps a number of Servants, and has his Houſe (or rather Palace) adorn'd with Plate, and with all ſorts of coſtly Furniture, hear this?

And yet never think of ſending to theſe miſerable Wretches the leaſt Relief.

How can he have the Heart to make his Will, and therein to give to every Son and Daughter ſeveral Thouſands, and to bequeath nothing to either of the forementioned Houſes?

Bridewell comes next under your Conſideration, which earneſtly begs your Liberal Contributions, and more than ever deſerves them.

Becauſe by the Zeal and Activity of thoſe who ſeem deſirous

deſirous to contribute all they can towards the Reformation of Mens Manners, the Number of thoſe which have been under the Diſcipline of that Hoſpital has been of late much greater than formerly.

And who would not give to the Maintenance of that Place, which keeps Vice ſomewhat in awe.

And which by hard Labour, and good wholeſome Chaſtiſement, brings bold and obſtinate Offenders to a due ſenſe of their paſt Impieties.

And by the Means of Bodily Puniſhment helps oftentimes to ſave their Souls.

But here perhaps an Addreſs to the Governours of this Hoſpital will be more ſeaſonable than to any other part of this Auditory.

Whom when I deſire to be Charitable, I do moſt earneſtly beſeech to put off all Bowels of Compaſſion, and to exerciſe the Truſt that is repoſed in them with the utmoſt Rigour.

The Perſons who come under your Cogniſance are, for the moſt part, the Peſts and Plagues of Mankind.

The Scandal of your Nation, and of your Religion too.

It is by their Means (I take in both Sexes) that ſo many open Villanies are daily committed in your Streets.

It is by their Means that the Youth of this Town is ſo often corrupted, and Gentlemen of the beſt Quality and greateſt Hopes ruin'd and undone.

It is by their Means that you cannot lye ſecure in your Beds, nor travel in ſafety upon the Roads.

It is by their Means that the other Hoſpitals are ſo full.

That ſo many Widows, by Reaſon of their Husbands too frequent Converſation with ſome of theſe Riotous Companions, are left with a numerous train of Children, and without one Penny to maintain them.

And that ſo many diſeaſed and rotten Carcaſes are forced

forced to be patched up at the Publick Charge.

Pity therefore in you would be the greateſt Cruelty.

Neither can you do a greater piece of Service, either to God, or your Country, or to theſe wicked People themſelves, than to make them ſmart ſeverely for their Offences.

That ſo, if it be poſſible, they may be reclaimed, at leaſt ſo far as never to run the hazard of coming under your Diſcipline any more.

And that the Severity of their Puniſhment may prove a warning to others not to be guilty of the like Crimes.

Bethlem Hoſpital ſtands laſt in your Roll, but complains as much of its Debts and Wants, and Petitions as earneſtly for a ſhare in your Charity as any of the Four former.

And how can you be ſo hard-hearted as not to afford ſome Comfort to Perſons that have loſt their Reaſon and Underſtanding?

To ſuch as, like the poſſeſſed in the Goſpel, run Naked about your Streets crying, and cutting themſelves with Stones.

Their Condition is moſt of all other deplorable, becauſe they have no Senſe thereof themſelves.

And you will ſeem to have imitated our Saviour, in having wrought a Miracle upon them.

If by your Bounty, inſtead of being Chain'd and Fetter'd in their dark Apartments we behold them in the Temple praiſing God for their Recovery, *i. e. ſitting at Jeſus Feet, and in a right Mind.*

Neither will ſuch your kindneſs towards them want even its preſent Reward: For they will certainly *publiſh, wherever they come, what great things you have done for them.*

But

But I know it will be Replyed;

That although the Complaints of the Hoſpital are very juſt, yet that theirs are as great and juſt too, who ſuggeſt to us how hard the Times have been, and how great the decay of Trade throughout the whole Kingdom.

But it is not to the Indigent, to ſuch as neither have Eſtates nor Trade, to whom the Hoſpitals offer their Complaints.

It is to ſuch, as not to mention greater Sums, are worth Forty, Thirty, Twenty, Ten, Five, and ſo down to Two or Three Thouſand Pounds.

Would but theſe devote ſome Yearly Portion, in proportion to what God has bleſſed them with, to the Neceſſities of others.

Would they but keep as exact an account thereof within their Books, as they do of other Matters,

The Hoſpitals might ſoon be out of Debt, and in a moſt Flouriſhing Condition.

Nay, would but they who have their conſtant Evening Meetings, even ſuch Meetings as are the moſt innocent, ſtay at home one Night in the Week with their Wives and Families, and lay aſide for Charitable Uſes what would have been then ſpent abroad, what a conſiderable Sum might by this Means be raiſed, and no Body feel the want of it?

So eaſie it is, for thoſe who are well inclined, to find ways of doing Good to others without doing the leaſt Harm to themſelves.

But I ſhall now recommend a far cheaper way of being Charitable in an high degree: And ſuch a way, as I hope the moſt Covetous will both approve of, and endeavour all they can to promote: For it will certainly ſave them Money, if it takes effect.

I ſhall keep you no longer in ſuſpenſe: It is that very way which, as I am told, you your ſelves are now upon. I mean, that noble Deſign of Building Work-houſes, and of conſtraining all the Poor that are able, both Young and Old, to take Pains for their Living.

This is ſo Glorious, and ſo Uſeful, an Undertaking, that were it but once brought to an happy Concluſion, there would be no ſuch Occaſion for Accidental Charities, as there now is.

The Poor, inſtead of being ſo great a burthen to you, would contribute very much to make you Rich.

You would then be free from thoſe importunate Beggars, which are now ſo troubleſome both to your Shops and Churches.

You would then have fewer Orphans to maintain; becauſe their Parents, being bred up to Induſtry, would not ſo often leave them in ſuch mean Circumſtances as they commonly now do.

It would help to rid the City of Thieves, Houſe-breakers, and other ſuch like pilfering Companions; who for want of being forced to Work live upon Rapine and Spoil, and upon doing Injuries to their innocent Neighbours.

Nay, your Hoſpitals for the Sick would be leſs crowded then they are; many Diſeaſes and Sickneſſes being oftentimes occaſion'd by thoſe Vices of which Idleneſs is commonly the chiefeſt Cauſe.

Let not therefore any Difficulties diſcourage thoſe, who are ingaged in ſo great and ſo good a Work, from proſecuting it to the utmoſt of their Power.

Neither let there be any Diſſenſions amongſt them, in reſpect thereof, upon the account of Party or Opinion, nor Emulations, unleſs it be about being moſt zealous to promote it.

It is a Deſign which ſome leſſer Corporations have already attempted with good Succeſs; and whoſe Example others are preparing to follow as faſt as they can. And what a ſhame would it then be for the Metropolis of the Kingdom, whoſe Riches are ſo great and whoſe Intereſt is ſo conſiderable, to be the laſt in taſting the bleſſed Fruits of it!

Go on therefore, I beſeech you, with Courage and Reſolution, and with what convenient Speed you can, in what you are about; and whatever oppoſition you may happen to meet with, *be not weary in well-doing.*

And may that God who is pleaſed to reckon it his chief Commandment, *that we love one another*, and who interprets all Acts of Mercy, which are ſhown to his Indigent Servants, to be done to himſelf, bleſs and proſper you in this your Righteous Enterpriſe. May he never forget your Works and Labour that proceedeth of Love. And may every one of you for the Time, Pains and Expences, he ſhall be at therein, receive from him an Hundred Fold in this World, and be made an Inheritour of Eternal Life and Glory in the World to come.

FINIS.

DR. *Lynford*'s Sermon before the Lord-Mayor, *November* 16. 1679, on 2 *Coron.* 20. 17.

——'s Sermon, *God's Providence the Cities Safety*, before the Lord-Mayor, *Feb.* 24. 168$\frac{8}{9}$, on *Pſalm* 127. 1.